

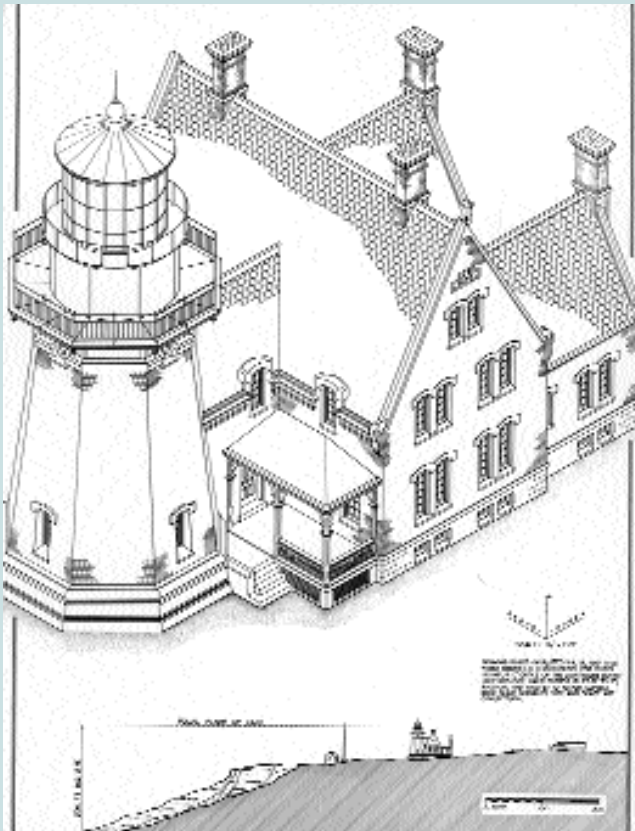
needs to be modeled for kids. They leave my programs thinking, "Wow! She's really into this. She loves lighthouses. Maybe I would enjoy this too."

Elinor De Wire has authored five books about lighthouses, including the Lighthouse Activity Book for kids, and written numerous articles on lighthouses for popular magazines. Her personal initiative to involve

children in the history, lore, and preservation of lighthouses has taken her to schools and youth organizations around the country. In her own elementary classroom in Connecticut, she teaches an interdisciplinary unit on lighthouses and has produced a home page devoted to the topic. Currently, she is at work on a young readers' novel called Libby at the Lighthouse.

Documenting Historic Lighthouses

In many cases, the first step in the preservation of a lighthouse, or any historic property, is documentation. The existing site should be recorded with drawings, photographs, and historical and descriptive reports to define the characteristics and significance of that site. The Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) program of the National Park Service was created in 1933 to develop this type of documentation, establishing a standardized collection of the American-built environment, held for perpetuity within the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress. This collection is available to the public and reproductions of the records can be obtained.



Isometric drawing from HABS documentation of Block Island Southeast Light Station, Block Island, Rhode Island. (HAER RI-27)

The HABS and HAER programs vary slightly in the process by which a site is recorded. HABS generally prepares documentation that reflects the "as is" existing condition of a site with historical background information in a written format. Little notation is made on the drawings. HAER generally prepares a record that interprets the site for its significant engineering or function. Often, the interpretive drawings use existing documents as a basis for the measurements rather than measure the structure in the field; the objective is to interpret a concept, not an existing condition, so that the structure can be rebuilt exactly in all its historic details.

The documentary record explains the form or function of lighthouses using a variety of graphic techniques. The basic drawing includes measured elevations, plans, and sections. More intricate interpretive drawings use axonometric techniques to explain the three-dimensional forms and arrangement of parts. These include planometrics (a rotated plan with vertical elements projected from it), or isometric projections which utilize a 30° angle in its base axis. Axonometrics are also used to develop "exploded" or "peel-away" views that illustrate how pieces fit together. Photographs or conceptual information are often translated into illustrations or sketches that further explain a process or character of the structure. Large-format black-and-white photography is used to capture the actual physical attributes of the structure and express its context in the landscape and relationship to other structures around it. Photography also provides greater textural details of the material's weathered condition.

Written documentation provides the basic data necessary for understanding the site's development and evolution throughout its working life. Specific descriptive information is recorded, and historical research explains the context, functions, alterations, and theories related to its operation. All materials are produced to archival standards and specific formats that assure a consistent product throughout the collection.

**—Todd Croteau
Architect**